

I Initiatives**A. Initiative Title**

Provide opportunities and incentives for existing IT workers for career growth and for non-IT workers to transition into IT positions (Goal VI - Initiative 7)

B. Initiative Leader

Allen Reynolds,
Department of State Civil Service,
225-342-8272,
areynolds@dscs.state.la.us

C. Summary

This initiative is designed to increase the number of highly trained IT professionals available to agencies by reducing turnover and enhancing the skills of existing staff. It will be accomplished through more effective utilization of dual career ladders and incentive policies and by expanding opportunities for professional development.

D. Description of the Initiative

Recruiting and retaining IT professionals is difficult and will continue to be so for the foreseeable future. Projections show significant shortages of trained professionals for several years to come. Turnover in this field is extremely expensive given the investment made in developing skills. The State must have a trained pool of IT professionals if it is to successfully implement Louisiana's vision for a digital government. One approach to doing that is to reduce the turnover and further develop the skills of existing staff.

Over the last several years the state has adopted policy changes that, if utilized properly, could reduce turnover within existing staff. Those policies include dual career ladders and monetary and non-monetary incentives for certain achievements including training. Agencies have been slow to adopt these new techniques and very conservative in their application. The Department of State Civil Service will develop and present training on these tools to IT managers and other agency officials to make certain that they are aware of these policies and how they can be applied. Once that is complete, the Department will establish a committee of IT managers and other agency officials to develop a model package for using both the dual career ladders and monetary and non-monetary incentives that can be adopted and used by individual agencies.

Opportunities for enhancing skills of existing staff can be expanded by cooperation between agencies and by working with higher education to expand IT training offered. This will be accomplished by establishing a committee to determine areas where more training could be useful, identifying available training sources and identifying ways in which higher education can meet those needs.

E. Participating Partners and Stakeholders

This initiative will involve all state agencies, higher education and the Department of State Civil Service. State agencies will participate in developing the policies and identifying training needs. They will also be asked to cooperate with each other in sharing training resources. Higher education will be asked to make training opportunities more readily available to state employees. The Department of State Civil Service will be involved in the development of policies. The CPTP program will be involved in identifying training needs, available sources and perhaps serving as a clearinghouse for shared training resources.

F. Assessment of Risks

The state must have a skilled IT workforce to be successful in implementing Louisiana's vision for a digital government. If these individuals are not available to agencies, the state will be delayed in implementing the digital government concept or be forced to look to private contractors to purchase the skills needed.

There are two significant barriers to implementing this initiative. First, it will be difficult to get agencies to devote the time necessary to complete the initiative. This can be overcome by having organizations give this initiative a high priority. Second, it will be difficult to convince many managers of the benefits to be derived from utilizing the new flexibilities and recruiting approaches. This hesitancy can be addressed and overcome through training and by successful implementations.

II. Project Information

There are two projects associated with this initiative. The first involves training and policy development. The second involves identifying training needs and finding sources for the training.

A. Project One Description

The Department of State Civil Service will develop and provide training to IT managers and other agency officials on using dual career ladders and monetary and non-monetary incentives to help reduce staff turnover. Once the training is complete, the Department of State Civil Service will organize and facilitate a committee of IT managers and other agency officials to develop a model policy for using dual career ladders and incentives that can be used by all agencies.

B. Project One Implementation Approach

The Department of State Civil Service will deliver the training in July 2000. The committee will be organized as soon as the training is completed. Model policies should be complete by December 2000.

C. Project One Cost

There should be no direct cost for this project. Agencies will incur costs when implementing the model policy, but the amount cannot be estimated at this time.

D. Project Two Description

This project involves establishing a committee to identify training needs, available training resources and identifying ways in which higher education can meet these needs.

E. Project Two Implementation Approach

The Department of State Civil Service and the Comprehensive Public Training Program will organize and facilitate a committee made up of IT managers, other agency officials and representatives of higher education. The committee should be able to complete its report by December 2000.

F. Project Two Cost

There should be no cost associated with the committee. There may be some costs associated with making training available, but the amount be estimated at this time.